

**James Madison to Thomas Ritchie, August 13, 1822.
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ed. Gaillard Hunt. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons,
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TO THOMAS RITCHIE. MAD. MSS.

Aug. 13, 1822.

Dr Sir Your favor of Aug 7 is so full & satisfactory an answer to my request of July 2, that I ought not to withhold my thanks for it. The delay was immaterial. But I lament most sincerely the afflicting causes of it.

With much esteem & friendly respects

Confidential

The Enquirer of the 6th, very properly animadverts on the attempts to pervert the historical circumstances relating to the Draught of the Declaration of Independence.¹ The fact that Mr. Jefferson was the author and the nature of the alterations made in the Original, are too well known and the proofs are too well preserved, to admit of successful misrepresentation.

¹ The attempt to give credit to Richard Henry Lee for part authorship of the Declaration of Independence appeared in the *Philadelphia Union* and *Federal Republican*, reprinted in the *Charleston Patriot*, and all copied in the *Richmond Enquirer*, August 6, 1822.

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In one important particular, the truth, tho' on record, seems to have escaped attention; and justice to be so far left undone to Virga. It was in obedience to *her positive instruction*, to her Delegates in Congs. that the motion for Independence was made. The instruction passed *unanimously* in her Convention on the 15 of May, 1776 and the Mover was of course, the Mouth only of the Delegation, as the Delegation was of the Convention. Had P. Randolph

2 See the Journal of that date (*Madison's Note*).

the first named not been cut off by Death, the motion wd. have been made by him. The duty, in consequence of that event devolved on the next in order R. H. Lee, who had political merits of a sort very different from that circumstantial distinction.